

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

January 17, 1987

Dear Senator Humphrey:

This is in response to your letter of January 12, in which you expressed concern over US policy towards Afghanistan, specifically with regard to our position on a Soviet withdrawal timetable.

As you know, the United States is not a party to the Geneva negotiations; we have avoided publicly getting into a "numbers game" regarding a withdrawal timetable. We have repeatedly made clear, however, that we firmly support the Government of Pakistan's position that the withdrawal timeframe must be based on logistical criteria and be "in months, not years." The quote mentioned in your letter was made with reference to the unacceptably long Soviet proposal of a three-to-four-year withdrawal schedule. My intent was to underline the unacceptability of a timeframe "in years."

Without getting into the details of the UN instruments being negotiated at Geneva, let me reiterate US policy towards Afghanistan. Our policy has remained essentially unchanged since the Soviet invasion in 1979 and reflects the views Congress has expressed on this issue. Our objective is a negotiated settlement, consistent with UN resolutions, and predicated on the prompt and complete withdrawal of Soviet troops and full self-determination for the people of Afghanistan. When meeting with resistance alliance leaders in June of last year, the President and I reaffirmed our strong support for the Afghan people's fight for freedom. We told them that the United States would not participate in a settlement that does not provide for a rapid and complete withdrawal of Soviet forces as well as a free act of self-determination.

The Administration has no intention of "selling out" the Afghan resistance. On the contrary, we have given them our strongest support and maintained a regular dialogue with Alliance leaders to consult with them on Afghan-related developments. In the absence of a comprehensive political settlement, we have made clear that we will continue to support the Afghan resistance cause by all appropriate means. As the

The Honorable
Gordon J. Humphrey,
United States Senate.

President said in his annual statement marking the anniversary of the Soviet invasion, "the Soviets must be made to understand that they will continue to pay a higher and higher price until they accept the necessity for a political solution involving the prompt withdrawal of their forces from Afghanistan and self-determination for the Afghan people."

I hope this clarifies our position. This Administration strongly shares your interest in achieving a just and viable settlement.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "George P. Shultz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "George" and last name "Shultz" being clearly legible.

George P. Shultz